June 24, 1969

Dear Russ:

Your plan to petition the United Nations, to draw attention to the frustration of human rights through repression, not alone denial of black rights in the United States, is an excellent one for many reasons.

You do not single out or isolate the blacks or the United States. Denial of rights is not limited to the former and is not alone by our country. It is a political crime of which many governments are guilty.

I also believe that Mrs. Shabazz should be invited to assume responsibilities in the move. This would give it continuity and, I believe, her participation would dramatize this as the concept of her husband. Many informed people believe it is the cause of his murder.

With one of your estimates I am not in accord. I think that, whether or not this movement succeeds to the degree you desire, it should not be abandoned in a few months. Once attention is focused on the largest and most permeating denials of rights, it could serve a useful purpose in providing means of drawing other denials of rights to public and United Nations attention. I would like to see it grow into a sort of international civil-rights/civil-liberties union. It could become an organization to which the denied of the world could turn for assistance. In fulfilling this function, it would serve to encourage all abused minorities to seek the end of their imposed sufferings. This would benefit the entire world, including those responsible for the maltreatments.

Where once these persecutions were economic, today they are also political, in the broad sense. Today the victims include all the people, not only the victims of the designs. Achieving political freedom and equality for the intended victims would benefit everyone else also, would strengthen the societies it freed, and is a minimum necessity if peace is to capture the world.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg